

# **U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Assistant Secretary  
For  
Veterans' Employment and Training**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

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**PREPARED BY:**

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## **Introduction**

This report is prepared in accordance with Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.) §4107(c) and §4212(c), and describes the programs and activities for which the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (OASVET) has primary responsibilities.

Some of the activities described in this report are carried out on a program year (PY) basis while others operate on a fiscal year (FY). For this report the appropriate reporting periods are PY 1999 (July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000) and FY 2000 (October 1, 1999 through September 30, 2000).

## **Executive Summary**

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) was established as an independent Agency within the Department of Labor (DOL) in 1982. Over the past 18 years, the employment and training environment has undergone tremendous changes. VETS is responding to the challenge of change and positioning itself to address the employment and training issues veterans will encounter in the workforce of the 21st century. In that respect, VETS continues to implement initiatives designed to improve its operational and programmatic performance. VETS is working with high profile companies and organizations to help veterans and separating military personnel market their military training and experience. This will allow them to move quickly into career building jobs within a variety of industries.

VETS is also developing a number of electronic Internet accessible tools that will assist veterans and employers make informed labor market decisions. These tools will provide user information on the need for training linked to a veteran's knowledge, skills, and abilities required for particular occupations. In addition, a new Internet database is under development that provides information on a wide variety of services and resources that are available based upon profiles of individuals and their needs. The site will take information provided by a veteran user to develop a self-profile and, in turn, will use that profile to link the veteran with appropriate resources and information. This venue will reduce the time required in searching the web to find the "right" answer and guidance.

An important component of VETS' current approach to serve the needs of 21st century veterans includes building upon the military's investment in those workers' skills. VETS has a number of licensing and certification initiatives with:

- the employment and training service provider community;
- employers;
- unions; and
- Federal and state licensing agencies.

VETS' goal is to make the certification and licensing process work for, rather than against, veterans. As part of this effort, VETS implemented a licensing and certification web site "Use Your Military Experience and Training"(UMET) ([www.umet-vets.dol.gov/](http://www.umet-vets.dol.gov/)) to better prepare current and former military personnel for civilian credentialing. This easily accessible, consolidated source of information on credentialing requirements was tailored to the unique needs of both groups. It is also a source for employers seeking access to a qualified pool of skilled labor and credentialing board officials who would like to learn more about how to assess the comparability of military and civilian training.

In addition to UMET, the following initiatives and projects were active in FY 2000:

### **Licensing and Certification State Pilot:**

This pilot was developed to move veterans through the licensing and certification process in select credentialed occupations in the pilot states. Five states originally signed on for this pilot in

FYs 98/99. Ohio and Maryland chose to continue their respective pilots for an additional year. Their second year of activity concluded on June 30, 2000.

Communication Workers of America (CWA) Military to Work Project:

This project was developed to move veterans into high technology jobs through an Internet program with employers represented by CWA. Fully qualified registrants are referred to high profile employers within the information technology and telecommunications fields. Those who may require additional training or course work are directed to apprenticeship and/or skills certification programs enabling them to qualify for career building jobs in the rapidly expanding industries.

Computing Technologies Industry Association (CompTIA) Initiative:

This initiative was developed to move veterans into information technology (IT) jobs through a six week training program that leads to entry-level certification in A+ and NETWORK +. Certified veterans are referred to high profile IT employers.

Promoting Re-employment Opportunities for Veterans (PROVET):

This is an employer focused program in which recently separated veterans are screened and placed into career-building jobs in targeted industries. The State of Tennessee which is targeting positions in the electronics and information technology industries is placing veterans at an average wage of over \$14 per hour.

Interagency Task Force on Certification and Licensing of Transitioning Military Personnel:

The Task Force was created on April 24, 1998, by DOL and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to identify barriers to federal certification and licensing and develop strategies to address them. The Task Force completed the Final Report on the Status of the Interagency Task Force on Certification and Licensing of Transitioning Military Personnel on June 14, 2000.

**VETS' Primary Programs:**

VETS is committed to enhancing services to veterans not only through new initiatives but enriching its current operating programs. In this world of incredible technological change there are thousands of veterans who need special employment and training assistance from VETS' programs. In FY 2000, many older veterans, disabled veterans, veterans facing corporate downsizing or technology displacement, homeless veterans and those veterans being recently separated from the military used at least one of VETS' programs.

The Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Program and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP):

In FY 2000, VETS emphasized the need for DVOPs to focus on the needs of those veterans who have employment barriers; particularly disabled veterans, through the provision of staff assisted services, job development and case management as stressed in Title 38, U.S.C. VETS also reemphasized the importance of the LVERs' role in the new employment and training environment. Program oversight, employer and community relations, facilitating job clubs and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops, and support of special projects are key activities that help ensure veterans' services keep pace with the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project: (HVRP)

*Note: Approximately 40% of homeless men are veterans, although veterans comprise only 34% of the general adult male population.*

*(National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, 1994)*

On any given day, as many as 250,000 veterans are living on the streets or in shelters, and perhaps twice as many experience homelessness at some point during the course of a year. VETS continues to make inroads in the plight of homeless veterans throughout the country.

VETS provided grants to state and local governments, and non-profit organizations through HVRP to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force.

Through September 30, 2000, which concludes the second quarter of the grant cycle, 4,639 homeless veterans were enrolled into the program. Of these, 2,383 were placed in unsubsidized employment. This equates to a 51.3% placement rate.

\*Veterans' Workforce Investment Program: (VWIP) (Section 168, Title 29 U.S.C. § 6913)

*\* Note: Job Training Partnership Act, Title IV-C (JTPA IV-C) became The Veterans' Workforce Investment Program on July 1, 2000.*

VETS also provided grants to states and non-profit organizations through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to fund programs which provide training, retraining, education, job placement and support services to targeted populations of veterans. During PY 1999, these grantees enrolled 3,371 veterans, of whom 2,126 were placed in unsubsidized employment. More than 3,000 participants received classroom training and 174 received placement in on-the-job training positions. JTPA discretionary funding was also used to develop and pilot new initiatives, such as PROVET and CompTIA.

### Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998: (VEOA)

VEOA gave VETS the investigative responsibility for veterans preference claims within the Federal Government. To ensure quality service for these veterans, VETS developed training for 125 investigators within the Agency. Of the 336 veterans preference complaints that were received in FY 2000 and the 32 cases carried in from FY 99, VETS resolved 346.

### Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act: (USERRA)

USERRA provides reemployment rights for veterans and reserve component members and protects them from employment discrimination. VETS administers and enforces the statute. Last year, VETS' staff closed 981 USERRA complaints, recovering \$1,344,877 in lost wages and benefits for veterans and reservists.

### State Employment Security Agencies: (SESAs)

In partnership with VETS, SESAs helped 495,942 veterans and other eligibles enter employment. This represents 30 percent of those veterans and other eligibles who registered for service with the SESAs compared to the 21 percent of the nonveterans who registered and were helped into jobs. However, these numbers fail to capture all the veterans who entered employment as a result of the assistance provided by the SESAs. In many states, the current measurement system does not capture veterans that are referred to and enter employment in another state. Many veterans and separating military personnel find or receive leads to employment because of TAP, the VEOA and USERRA. Other veterans find jobs using the electronic tools provided by the Department using

the Internet, but do not register with a SESA.

Transition Assistance Program: (TAP)

TAP continues to be a highly successful program for separating and retiring military personnel and their spouses. In FY 2000, over 121,000 participants attended over 3,180 TAP workshops. While this was a 5% decrease from FY 1999, it can be directly attributed to the cessation of military downsizing. VETS' averaged 265 monthly workshops throughout the year. In FY 2001, VETS will continue to emphasize "quality," and in that respect will update TAP components.

Federal Contractor Program:

Through the Federal Contractor Program, 838,388 job openings were listed with SESAs and 15,947 special disabled and Vietnam-era veterans entered employment. Federal contractors reported that there are currently 1,120,370 special disabled and Vietnam-era veterans employed by Federal contractors. Of this number 113,309 were new hires.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment: (VR&E)

VA and VETS continue to work in partnership on behalf of Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Chapter 31 veterans. VETS reached 95% of the Strategic Plan "entered employment" goal for FY 2000 and exceeded the FY 1999 "entered employment" rate by 15 percent. As a result, 4,433 special disabled veterans who were referred to and registered with Local Employment Service Offices (LESOs) became gainfully employed during FY 2000.

## **SECTION I**

# **Office of the Assistant Secretary** **for** **Veterans' Employment and Training**

The Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) is appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Labor in the formulation and implementation of all DOL policies and procedures designed to carry out veterans' employment and training services, to assure proper veterans' employment emphasis under Federal contracts, to protect and advance veterans' reemployment rights, and to advise the Secretary regarding all other DOL employment, unemployment, and training programs to the extent that they affect veterans.

The ASVET position was created by Public Law (P.L.) 96-466 in October 1980, to replace the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment position created by P.L. 94-502 in October 1976. The bipartisan Congressional intent was to establish leadership of the Department's programs for services to veterans at the policy making level, and thereby help to ensure that Congressional mandates for "effective (1) job and job training counseling service programs, (2) employment placement service programs, and (3) job training placement service programs for eligible veterans" are carried out by the DOL. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (OASVET) was established by Secretary's Order No. 5-81 in December 1981.

Since the establishment of the OASVET, the responsibility for administering most of the major programs and for establishing administrative controls governing veterans' employment and training services under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapters 41, 42, and 43; under Title 29 U.S.C. §1721, and under Title 42 U.S.C. §11448 has been consolidated in the OASVET. The OASVET also has a lead role, together with the Department of Defense (DOD) and VA, in the implementation of TAP, which is authorized at Title 10 U.S.C. §1144.

## **Vision:**

VETS' vision is that by focusing at all times on our customers' needs, we will provide veterans and others the high quality and timely services they require in order to succeed in the changing labor exchange environment.

## **Mission:**

VETS' mission is to promote the economic security of America's veterans by minimizing unemployment and underemployment among veterans with service connected disabilities and among other targeted veterans groups, and by providing the maximum of employment and training opportunities to all veterans and other eligible persons.

## **Organizational Structure**

## **National Office:**

### Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training:

The OASVET represents the headquarters component of the organization and is headed by an Assistant Secretary and a Deputy Assistant Secretary. The OASVET is comprised of two offices that support VETS' ongoing activities and a specialized team engaged in strategic planning, marketing and legislative analysis. In FY 2000, VETS' headquarters operations were carried out by 32 employees. OASVET responsibilities include:

- Grants to states to fund DVOPs and LVERs employed in Local Employment Service Offices (LESOs) [Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41] administered by SESAs;
- Grants to states, nonprofit organizations, and service delivery areas [Title 29 U.S.C. §1721] to provide employment and training services to eligible veterans;
- Grants to state and local governments, and nonprofit organizations through the HVRP [Title 38 U.S.C., §4111] to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force;
- Promulgating Federal regulations establishing performance standards for states' delivery of employment services to veterans and for monitoring, through field staff, the performance of grantees against those standards;
- Oversight and monitoring of investigation and mediation of complaints by veterans, reservists, and National Guard members regarding employment and reemployment rights, including pension rights [Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 43];
- A nationwide outreach and public information program to inform veterans, reservists, and National Guard members of the services available to them, and to inform private sector employers of their responsibilities regarding employment and reemployment of veterans and the services available to employers;
- Oversight and monitoring of investigation and mediation of complaints from veterans against Federal agencies' veteran preference hiring practices and reduction in force (RIF) procedures; and
- Leadership and coordination of TAP workshops for separating service members.

### Office of Agency Management and Budget:

This office advises the Assistant Secretary on the financial management of the Agency, administers Agency oversight and internal controls to ensure program integrity, serves as the Agency's grants officer and contracting technical representative, and provides agency leadership in process planning, budget development, policy analysis, internal control, and administration. Staff provides personnel management, procurement, records management, and other administrative services.

### Strategic Planning, Marketing, and Legislative Analysis Team:

This group researches, analyzes, and interprets data relating to VETS' customers and their needs. It provides leadership and facilitates long-range strategic planning and develops public information and marketing efforts for employers and the general public emphasizing the value of veterans as quality employees and the services available from VETS. The team tracks and analyzes legislation, prepares testimony for the Assistant Secretary, and coordinates the development, publication, and dissemination of information about agency activities and long-range goals.

### Office of Operations and Programs:

This office carries out line management responsibilities related to VETS' field activities, including the formulation of operating budgets, budget execution and staffing, development of annual operating plans, implementation of individual and program performance standards, and evaluation of regional, state, individual, and program performance.

The office also advises the Assistant Secretary in formulating, interpreting, and implementing all Agency statutory and related Departmental policies and procedures. It assures that the appropriate emphasis is given to veterans' employment issues by other Federal agencies and Federal contractors. It investigates complaints by veterans, reservists, and National Guard members regarding their employment and reemployment rights; investigates complaints of failure to provide veterans' preference in Federal government hiring and RIF procedures, and provides technical assistance to employers and others regarding all veterans' employment programs and policies.

### **Regional & State Offices:**

VETS carries out its responsibilities through a nationwide network that includes seven Regional Administrators for Veterans' Employment and Training (RAVETs), an Assistant Regional Administrator in six of the seven regional offices, a Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) in each state, an Assistant Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (ADVET) for every 250,000 veterans and eligible persons in each state, Veterans' Program Specialists, and a Veterans' Program Assistant in each state. There were 222 staff positions authorized in the field in FY 2000.

VETS' field staff are cross-trained in all agency responsibilities to better carry out all the grants administration and direct services for which the Agency is responsible. The field staff also includes two Regional Lead Centers (RLCs) staffed by program specialists under the supervision of a RAVET. Each RLC is responsible for nationwide data services and other operational activities – one in VETS' Chicago Regional Office (for the DVOP/LVER and public labor exchange programs), and the other in VETS' Atlanta Regional Office for the USERRA program.

VETS' field staff are responsible for employment and training programs within their assigned region or state and work closely with and provide technical assistance to SESAs, and JTPA/VWIP grants recipients. They also ensure that veterans are provided the priority services required by law and coordinate activities and programs with employers, labor unions, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), and community organizations. Such cooperative efforts are accomplished through planned outreach and public information activities to encourage the private sector to use all legislatively authorized employment and training service opportunities to help veterans.

Additionally, VETS' field staff investigates complaints alleging violations of USERRA committed by private and public employers, including Federal agencies. VETS provides technical assistance and information to veterans, reservists, National Guard members, military personnel, attorneys and employers. VETS also assures employer compliance with USERRA's mandate that service members' employment and reemployment rights, including job status, pay, seniority, pension and health benefits, not be adversely affected by military service or training. To that end, VETS performs the following functions: receives and processes complaints from people seeking information regarding service members' reemployment rights; investigates cases and mediates settlements; and monitors the status of claims referred to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Office of Special Counsel (OSC).

Field staff maintain liaison and cooperative relationships with a variety of agencies and organizations to promote veterans' programs. VETS' field staff coordinate with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to request information relevant to resolution of veterans' complaints against Federal agencies based on alleged failures to observe veterans' preference requirements.

During FY 2000, VETS' field staff conducted 1,311 on-site LESO and 120 on-site evaluation visits of JTPA IV-C and HVRP grants programs. Their responsibilities included the negotiation and monitoring of quantitative performance measurements of employment and training services to veterans.

VETS' field staff ensure that the requirements of Title 38, U.S.C., Chapter 41 and the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 are fulfilled. Field staff carry out a wide variety of activities to ensure that veterans in need of WIA and Wagner-Peyser services have access to those services at one-stop career centers throughout the Nation. They also provide technical assistance on veterans' issues to state and local workforce investment boards; with employers, unions, VSOs and community-based organizations.

With enactment of P.Ls. 101-237, 101-510 and 102-484, VETS' field staff also coordinates with representatives from DOD installations, VA regional offices, VSOs and SESAs to ensure that TAP is effectively administered.

## **Local Veterans' Employment Representatives**

The LVER program was first authorized under the original "GI Bill," the Servicemen's

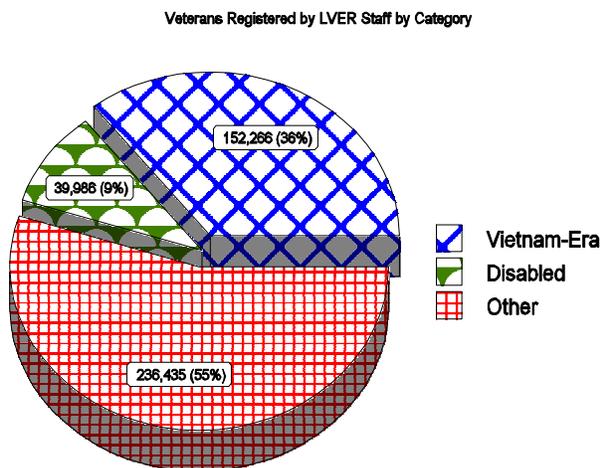
Readjustment Act of 1944; P.L.78-346. As amended by P.L.100-323 and more recently by P.L.102-16, it is codified at Section 4104 of Title 38, U.S.C. The program provides grants to SESAs for the appointment of LVERs to positions identified in LESOs to enhance the services provided to veterans through oversight, technical support, and the direct provision of services.

One full-time LVER is generally assigned in each LESO which had 1,100 or more veterans registered in the preceding 12-month reporting period; a half-time LVER is in those offices with fewer than 1,100, but more than 350 veterans registered in the previous 12-month reporting period. An additional LVER may be appointed to an office for every 1,500 veterans above the 1,100 level.

The FY 2000 LVER appropriation of \$77.253 million was projected to support 1,277 of the 1,600 LVER positions authorized under Title 38 U.S.C. § 4104. The actual number of LVER positions paid nationally in FY 2000 was 1,244 or 97 percent of the planned level. The average cost per LVER position was \$62,100.

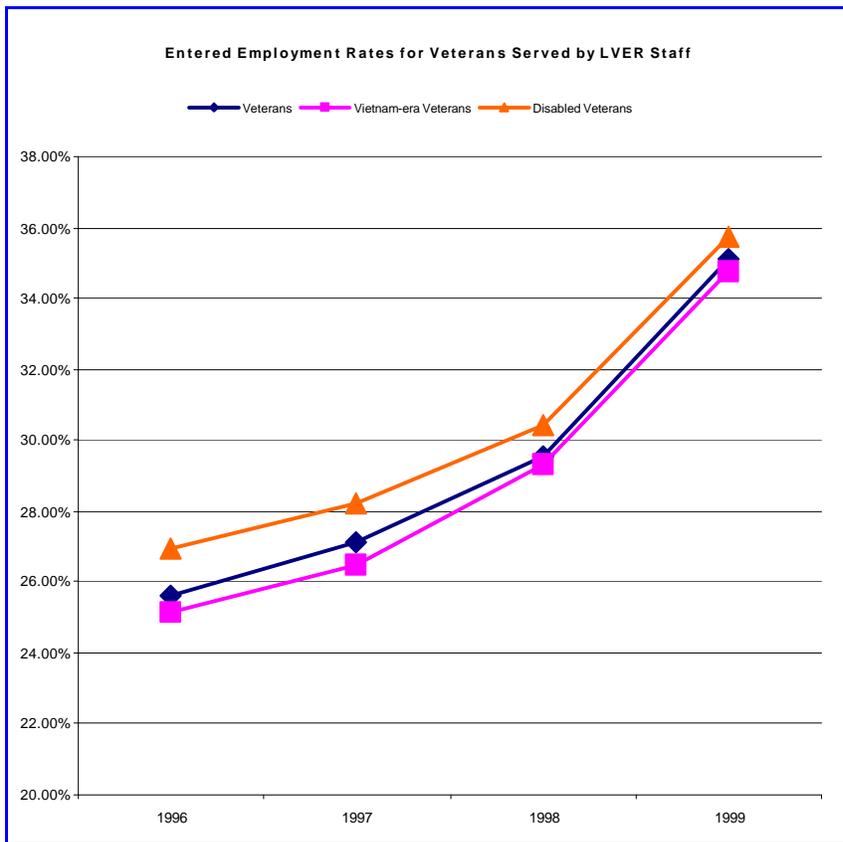
During PY 1999, LVERs registered a total of 428,687 veterans and other eligibles. Of this total, 152,266 (36 percent) were Vietnam-era veterans; 39,986 (9 percent) were disabled veterans and 19,169 were special disabled veterans (a subset of disabled veterans). (See Chart 1 below for a demographic breakout of veterans registered by LVER staff nationally.)

**Chart 1**



Since PY 1996, VETS has placed additional emphasis on providing intensive services to those veterans who were considered most in need. As a result of this emphasis, there was a 49 percent increase in the percentage of veterans and other eligibles placed in training, and a 28 percent increase in the percentage of veterans and other eligibles receiving vocational guidance services. Increased emphasis on the provision of intensive services to those most in need also resulted in a 37 percent increase in the entered employment rate for veterans between PY 1996 and PY 1999. These results are noteworthy considering the fact that 3 percent fewer LVER positions were funded with the available dollars during the same period of time.

(See Chart 2 below for entered employment rates by veteran category for PYs 1996 - 1999).



Entered employment is the current data element used to indicate the positive outcome of services provided to veterans by LVERs. Entered employment is the unduplicated count of all applicants (veterans) who entered employment by job

placement or who secured employment within 90 calendar days of receiving specific services that were wholly or partially funded by the SESAs.

During PY 1999 the number of veterans and other eligibles who entered employment as a result of services provided by LVERs was 150,086. Similarly, 14,291 disabled veterans, and 6,700 special disabled veterans entered employment as a result of services provided by LVERs.

In addition, 4,564 disabled veterans and 2,284 special disabled veterans were counseled; 7,379 disabled veterans and 3,663 special disabled veterans received vocational guidance; and 4,661 disabled and 2,857 special disabled veterans were assigned for intensive services to a case manager.

## Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program

The DVOP program was first established by Executive Order in 1977. It was later authorized by P.L. 96-466, the Veterans' Rehabilitation and Education Amendments of 1980, and is codified at Section 4103A of Title 38, U.S. C. DVOP grants are made to SESAs according to the distribution formula prescribed by law and administrative regulations.

The FY 2000 appropriations for the DVOP program of \$80.215 million was designed to support 1,418 DVOPs, but 630 fewer than the formula level of 2,048. The actual number of DVOP positions paid nationally in FY 2000 was 1,334 or 94 percent of the planned level. The average cost per DVOP position was \$ 60,131, including all operating expenses.

In PY 1999, 435,248 veterans and other eligibles were registered for services by DVOPs. DVOPs counseled 32,831 veterans, provided case management services for 21,800 veterans, provided vocational guidance to 76,630 veterans, and referred 21,982 veterans to Federal training.

Entered employment is the current data element used to indicate the positive outcome of services provided by DVOPs to veterans. Entered Employment is the unduplicated count of all applicants (veterans) who entered employment by job placement or who secured employment within 90 calendar days of receiving specific services that were wholly or partially funded by the SESAs. Because of the various services provided by DVOPs, 138,516 veterans and other eligibles entered employment.

Of the 435,248 veterans and other eligibles registered for service by DVOPs, 153,655 (35 percent) were Vietnam-era veterans, as shown in Chart 3. Services provided by DVOPs to these Vietnam-era veterans include: 11,391 were counseled; 8,247 received case management services; 26,505 received vocational guidance services; and 8,091 were referred to Federal training. Of the 153,655 Vietnam-era veterans registered by DVOPs, 47,297 entered employment.

DVOPs also registered 50,400 disabled veterans (12 percent of all registered veterans). The number of disabled veterans who received some of the services provided included: counseling (6,244); case management services (7,459); vocational guidance services (10,113); referred to Federal training (4,695) and 16,702 who entered employment.

DVOPs also registered 25,155 special disabled veterans, a subset of disabled veterans (almost 50 percent of total registered disabled veterans). States reported that DVOPs provided counseling services to 3,384 special disabled veterans; case management services to 4,961; vocational guidance services to 5,204; referral to Federal training for 2,670. As a result of these services, 8,273 special disabled veterans entered employment.

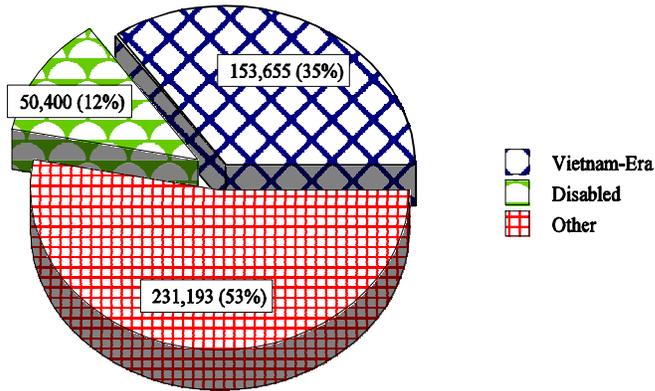
VETS renewed emphasis on providing intensive services to those veterans most in need led to a 382 percent increase in the percentage of registered veterans who were assigned to receive case management services from DVOPs between PY 1996 and PY 1999. Case Management provides for ongoing, one-on-one, personal assistance. Such assistance includes, but is not limited to, providing guidance pertaining to vocational choice, assistance in obtaining training to reach employability, and follow-up services over a period of time required to obtain employment. As a result of the increase in case management services provided between PY 1996 and PY 1999, there was a 105 percent increase in the percentage of veterans being placed in training and a 29 percent increase in the percentage of

veterans receiving vocational guidance services.

The entered employment rate for veterans increased by 37 percent between PY 1996 and PY 1999. These results are noteworthy considering that 9 percent fewer DVOP positions were supportable with available dollars during the same period of time.

**Chart 3**

**Veterans Registered by DVOP Staff by Category**

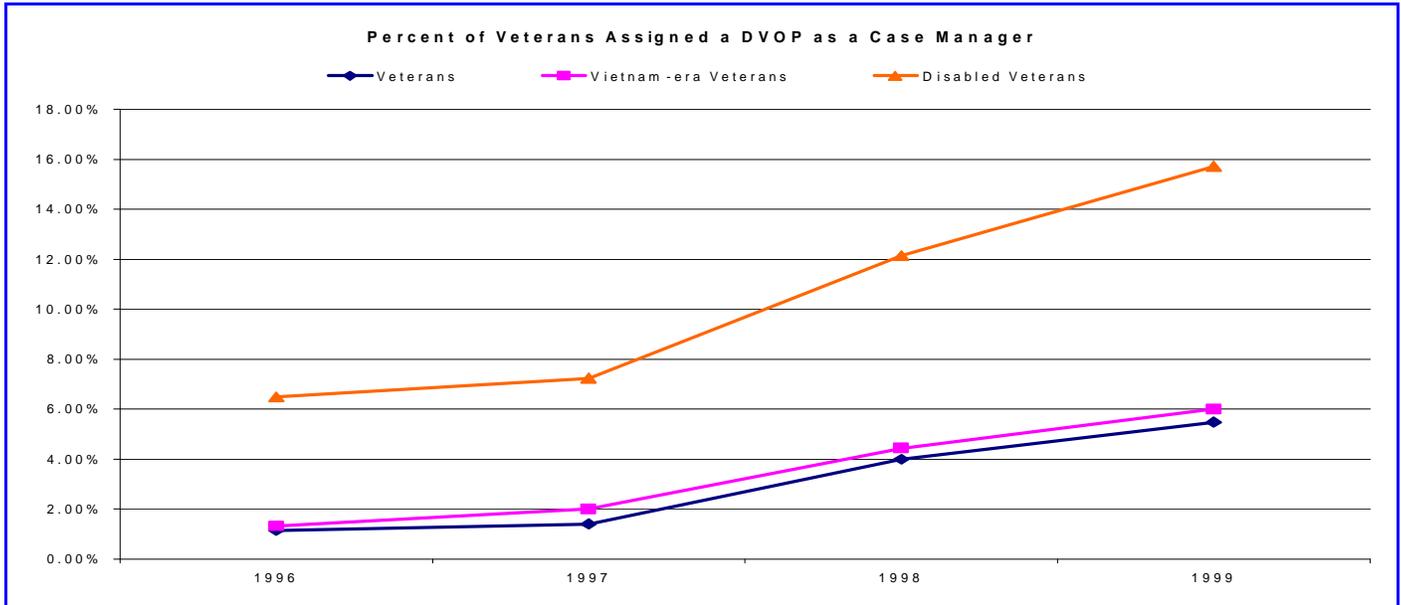


(See Charts 4 and 5(next page) for case management and entered employment rates by veteran category for Program Years 1996 - 1999).

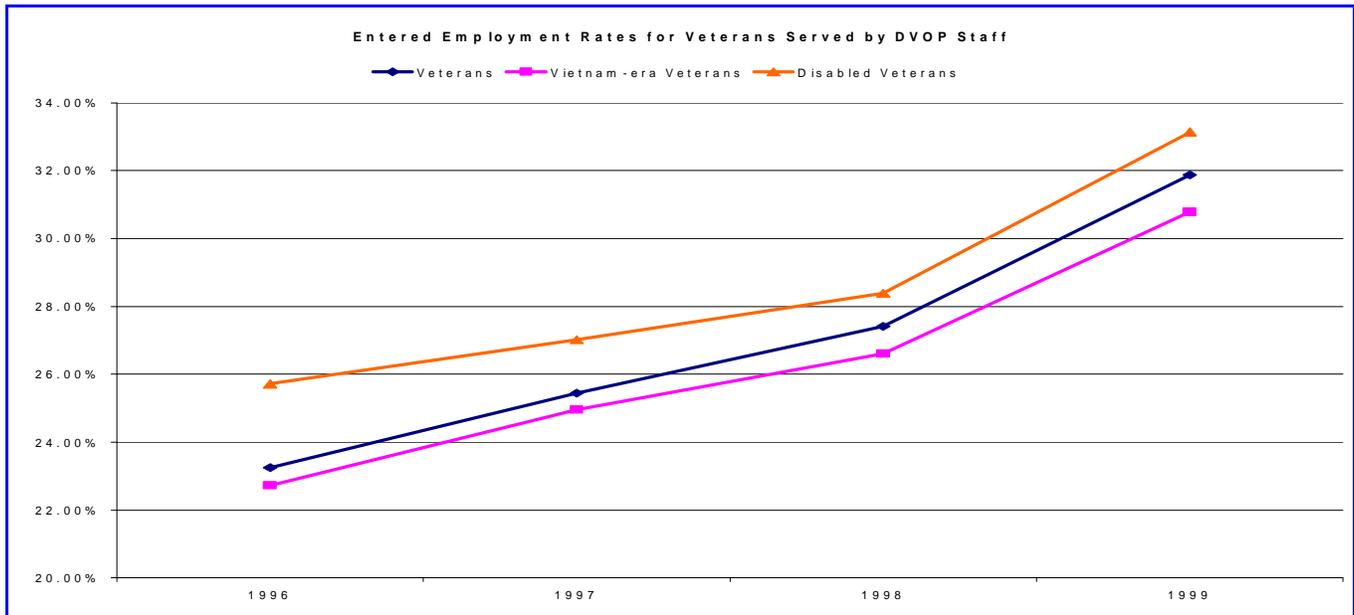
# \*Veterans' Workforce Investment Program Section 168 , [Title 29 U.S.C.§ 6913]

*\* Note: Job Training Partnership Act, Title IV-C (JTPA IV-C) became Veterans' Workforce*

**Chart 4**



**Chart 5**



*Investment Program (VWIP) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) on July 1, 2000.*

The statutory intent of VWIP, Section 168 of the WIA, is to support employment and training programs through grants or contracts to meet the needs of workforce investment activities for veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated (within 48 months of separation from the military) veterans.

The PY 2000 (July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2001) funding level for these specialized veterans' employment and training programs was \$7.3 million. The PY 2000 competitive process allowed for two year funding cycles. The second year funding is based on performance and availability of funds. Of the PY 2000 VWIP funds, \$6.2 million was provided to ten (10) states, with the remaining funds to be used to support special demonstration projects. The outcomes for PY 2000 programmatic and fiscal activities will be reported in the 2001 Annual Report To Congress.

For the purpose of the FY 2000 Annual Report To Congress, the PY 1999 (July 1, 1999 - June 30, 2000) programmatic and fiscal information are being provided. In PY 1999, \$7.3 million was authorized under JTPA and was made available for employment and training programs for veterans. Ten (10) grants were renewed, for a total of \$5.8 million. The remaining \$1.5 million supported a number of special demonstration projects. The funds were allocated for innovative and unique pilot, demonstration and research projects which included Black Veterans for Social Justice, Brooklyn, NY; VetTech/New England Shelter; Women's Research and Education Institute; CWA; American G.I. Forum; PROVET; and Native American Veteran programs in Hawaii, Arizona, Wyoming, Montana and Utah. It should be noted that some of the demonstration and research projects awarded late in the program year are still in operation. Therefore, the performance information is subject to change.

The PY 1999 programs provided training, retraining, education, job placement, and support services including testing, counseling, and formal classroom and on-the-job training and complement services provided by states through mainstream JTPA program operators under Titles II and III, and the Wagner- Peyser Act. The programs provided by IV-C allow for specialized employment, training and educational resources to be tailored to meet the needs of the specific target populations of veterans to be served. In many programs, minority, women, homeless and/or disabled veterans are targeted to receive these specialized services.

Grants awarded in PY 1999 were active for a full 12 months. All competitive grants ended on June 30, 2000, with the exception of one grant that ended on September 30, 2000. Some of the JTPA-IVC discretionary grants continued beyond PY 1999. Accomplishments from these grants will be reported in the FY 2001 Annual Report.

The combined PY 1999 enrollment goal of 3,162 participants was exceeded by 18 percent. A total of 3,731 veterans were enrolled in JTPA-IVC programs, of which 2,115 were Vietnam-era veterans, 933 were recently separated veterans and 683 were disabled veterans. Three thousand and three (3,003) participants were provided classroom training and 174 received placements in on-the-job training positions. The remaining 554 individuals received ancillary and supportive services.

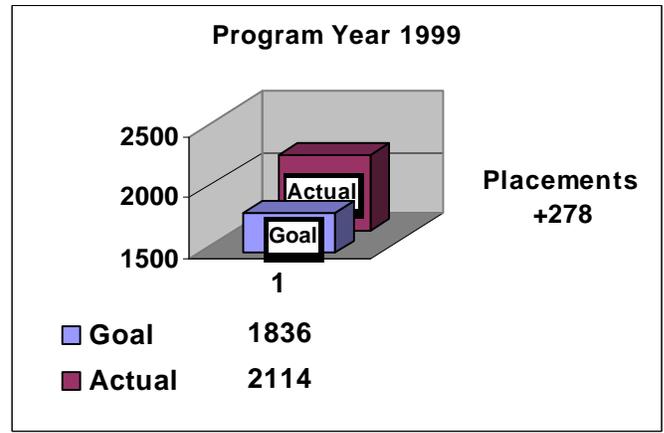
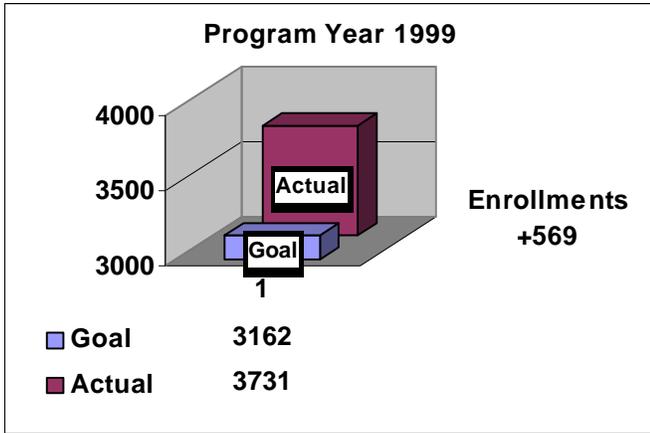
The combined PY 1999 placement goals of 1,836 were exceeded by 15%. A total of 2,114 veterans were placed in employment.

(See Chart 6 on the following page that provides additional analysis and comparisons of PY 1998 and PY 1999 grants activity and accomplishments).

Chart 6

JTPA, Title IVC, Enrollments:

JTPA, Title IVC, Placements:



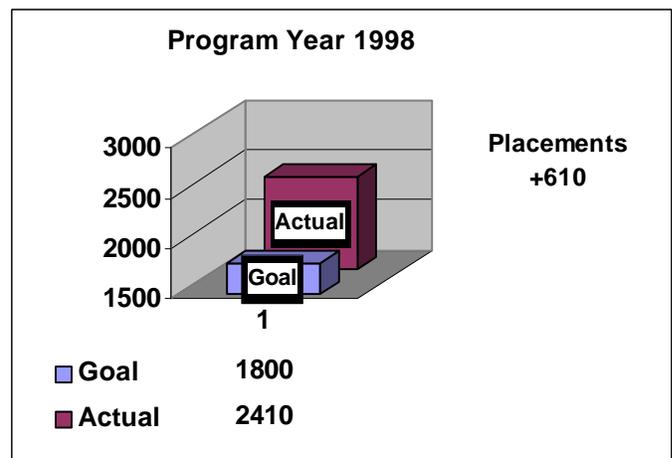
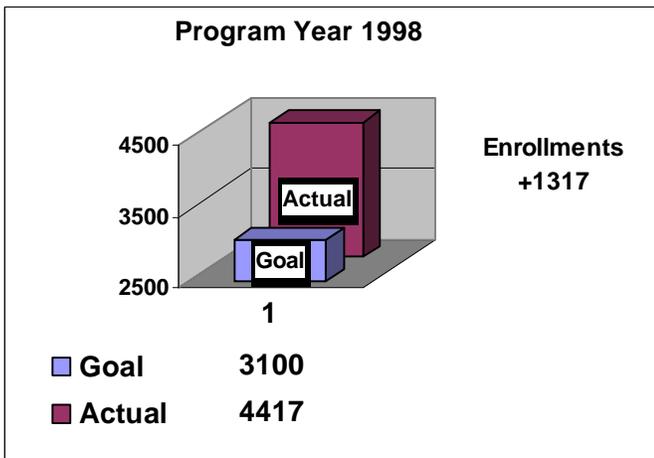
PY 1999 - Placement Rate = 57 percent (2,114 placements divided by 3,731 enrollments)

PY 1999 - Cost Per Placement = \$3,453

PY 1999 - Cost Per Enrollment = \$1,957

PY 1999 - Average National wage @ placement = \$10.93 per hour

ANALYSIS: The costs per enrollment and placement have increased over PY 1998. This is attributed to increased costs in training, as more emphasis is being placed on training individuals for employment in Information Technology (IT) occupations. The placement rate and entry level wages have increased over PY 1998. This is a positive outcome, with room for improvement. The enrollment and placement numbers for PY 1999 are not final as some grants are still in operation, as they were awarded late in the program year.



JTPA, Title IVC, Enrollments:

JTPA, Title IVC, Placements:

PY 1998 – Placement rate = 55 percent (2,410 placements divided by 4,417 enrollments).

PY 1998 – Cost per placement = \$3,029

PY 1998 – Cost per enrollment = \$1,653

PY 1998 – National average wage @ placement is \$9.61 per hour.

## **Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project**

The HVRP program was authorized under Section 738 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in July 1987 (Title 42 U.S.C. §11448). Funds are awarded competitively to units of state or local government and nonprofit organizations. The purpose of the program is to “expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force.”

The HVRP program was not funded for FYs ‘95, ‘96 and ‘97. The program was re authorized by P.Ls. 105-41 and 105-114 for FYs 1998 and 1999 respectively. VETS received an appropriation of \$3 million for FY 1999 and \$9,636,000.00 for FY 2000.

HVRP grantees provided an array of services to the homeless veteran. The general practice is to deal with these individuals from a holistic perspective, placing the major emphasis on entering employment. This requires the grantees to utilize all available resources and linkages in the local community, which includes establishing and maintaining relationships with other Federal, State, and local programs/services that serve the homeless population. HVRP grantees are funded, with the expectations that they will provide training and develop employment opportunities that assist homeless veterans in reentering the workforce. In addition to training, grantees will provide employment assistance and supportive services, such as job counseling, job development, resume preparation, referrals for medical or substance abuse treatment, and provide transportation, housing, and clothing assistance. Many of the grantees employ veterans who have been homeless, to serve as outreach workers for the program. Through September 30, 2000, which concludes the second quarter of the grant cycle, 4,639 homeless veterans were enrolled into the program, 2,383 were placed or entered into unsubsidized employment. This equates to a 51% placement rate. (2,383 placements/entered employments divided by 4,639 enrollments) In FY 1999, \$3,000,000 was awarded in grants, of which 4,111 homeless veterans were enrolled in the program and 2,195 were placed or entered into unsubsidized employment. The corresponds to a 53% placement rate. (e.g 2,195 placements/entered employments divided by 4,111 enrollments)

VETS announced two separate funding competitions during FY 2000. The first was targeted for the 75 largest U.S. cities where the need was the greatest. The second was open to non-urban areas to determine what works best in such locales. VETS awarded a total of fifty-four (54) grants for both competitions. The forty-three (43) urban grants operated from April 1 through December 31, 2000, and the eleven (11) non-urban grants are scheduled to operate from September 1 through August 31, 2001.

## **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights**

USERRA was signed into law on October 13, 1994, and is codified at Title 38, chapter 43, U.S.C. USERRA is a complete revision of the predecessor Veterans' Reemployment Rights law, and continues to protect civilian job rights and benefits for veterans, members of the National Guard and reserves.

### **Cases Opened:**

USERRA provides that the Secretary of Labor, through VETS, will open cases on behalf of persons filing complaints against private, employers, State or local governments, or Federal executive agencies. In FY 2000, VETS opened 929 new cases. Investigation continued on 160 cases opened in the previous FY.

Of the FY 2000 cases opened, 572 (61.6 percent) involved private employers, 191 (20.5 percent) involved States or the political subdivisions of States, and 166 (17.8 percent) involved Federal agencies. Cases were opened for 691 (74 percent) reserve and National Guard personnel, 220 (24 percent) veterans, and 18 (2 percent) persons who were undergoing examination or applying for military service.

Many cases involved multiple issues. Of the 929 cases opened in FY 2000, there were 1,133 issues. These issues included 191 (17 percent) refusals to reinstate or reemploy the individuals following a period of military service; 419 (37 percent) employment discrimination issues based on a person's military service or obligations, or due to a person's actions to enforce the protections of USERRA; 39 (3 percent) layoffs because of military obligation; 69 (6 percent) refusals of employers to hire individuals with military obligations; and four (less than 1 percent) discharges of individuals during the period of protection from discharge without cause.

The issues involving other than the hiring or firing of claimants included: 41 (4 percent), seniority; 25 (2 percent), failure to provide non-seniority benefits; 57 (5 percent), denied promotions; 49 (4 percent), vacation; 3 (less than 1 percent), accommodation or retraining of service members; 10 (1 percent), retraining or reasonable accommodations for disabled service members; 33 (3 percent), pay rates; 30 (3 percent), on status in employment; 49 (4 percent), involving employee pension benefit plan issues; 16 (1 percent), health benefit plans; and 98 (9 percent), not covered by specified issue codes in VETS' database.

### **Cases Resolved:**

VETS closed 981 cases in FY 2000, of which 886 (90 percent) were closed in 90 days or less and an additional 44 (5 percent) were closed between 90 and 120 days. Three cases remained open for more than 365 days at the end of FY 2000.

Of the 981 closed USERRA cases, 345 claims (35 percent) were resolved through VETS mediation efforts. VETS actions resulted in \$1,344,877 in lost wages and benefits being recovered for claimants. There were 90 (9 percent) individuals who chose to withdraw their claims during the investigation. In 325 cases (33 percent), investigations resulted in determinations that the claims were without merit, and in 54 cases (6 percent), claimants were determined not eligible for benefits sought. In 104 cases (10 percent), there was administrative closure because claimants did not cooperate with the investigation or simultaneously pursued the same claim with the assistance of a third party. The remaining 6 percent of the cases were processed for referral to either the Attorney General or the Office of Special Counsel (OSC).

### **Cases of Reprisal:**

Section 4311(c)(1) of Title 38, U.S.C. provides that an employer may not discriminate in employment

or take any adverse employment action against any person because that person had testified in connection with a proceeding or assisted with an investigation. In FY 2000, VETS did not receive any reprisal complaints.

Subpoenas:

VETS issued no subpoenas in FY 2000.

Attorney General:

Upon a claimant's request pursuant to Title 38 U.S.C. §4323(a)(1), VETS refers to the Attorney General complaints against private employers and States when VETS' efforts do not resolve the complaint. The Civil Division of the DOJ (Civil Division) and the United States Attorneys Offices (USAO) act on behalf of the Attorney General in USERRA matters.

VETS refers cases to the Civil Division through DOL's Regional Solicitors (RSOL). Each referral includes the VETS investigative file, a memorandum analyzing the case and recommending, based upon the facts and the law, whether representation should be provided or declined, and the RSOL's analysis and recommendation.

Based upon a review of the record, the Civil Division either forwards the case to the USAO for review and appropriate action or declines representation and returns it to the RSOL due to a lack of merit. If the USAO is reasonably satisfied that the claimant is entitled to the benefits sought, the USAO, often with the assistance of the RSOL, represents the claimant and attempts to resolve the matter, through litigation if necessary.

In FY 2000, the Civil Division received 37 cases from DOL. In FY 1999, the Civil Division also received 37 cases from DOL.

Office of Special Counsel:

USERRA clarified and significantly strengthened the employment and reemployment rights of Federal employees who perform service in a uniformed service. In doing so, the Act provided new responsibilities for the OSC. In FY 2000, the OSC received seven USERRA referrals from the DOL. In FY 1999 the OSC also received seven USERRA referrals from DOL.

Trends:

This report documents the continuation of significant improvement in case processing times noted in the last report. Also, the number of USERRA cases opened continued its four-year decline. For FY 2000, there was a decrease of 10 percent from FY 1999's 1029 cases. With respect to employer type, the decrease in case openings was not uniform. While claims against private and State government employers decreased compared to FY 1999, the number of cases filed against Federal employers actually increased slightly in FY 2000 -- from 157 the previous year to 166. The average age for all cases closed in FY 2000 continued the recent trend of dramatic year-over-year improvement. Last year's average closed case age of 47 days was a 12 days or 20 per cent improvement over FY 1999's 59 days. For the first time, VETS exceeded its two key performance goals in this area, closing 90 percent of cases within 90 days and 95 percent of cases within 120 days, compared to goals of 85 percent and 92 percent respectively. Two factors that contributed to improvement in the area of USERRA compliance were VETS' continuing Federal employer USERRA outreach (described below), and training on USERRA, Federal employment laws and regulations, and the investigation of USERRA claims, which was provided to VETS staff at the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) during FY 1999. During FY 2000, VETS provided basic USERRA training at NVTI for previously untrained staff.

Efforts to Improve Employers' Awareness of USERRA:

*USERRA Advisor:* The USERRA Advisor system, introduced in November 1997, provides electronic information and advice on USERRA to employers as well as protected persons, focusing specifically on the user's particular situation. The Advisor can be found in the VETS section of the Department's "elaws" page at <http://www.dol.gov/elaws>.

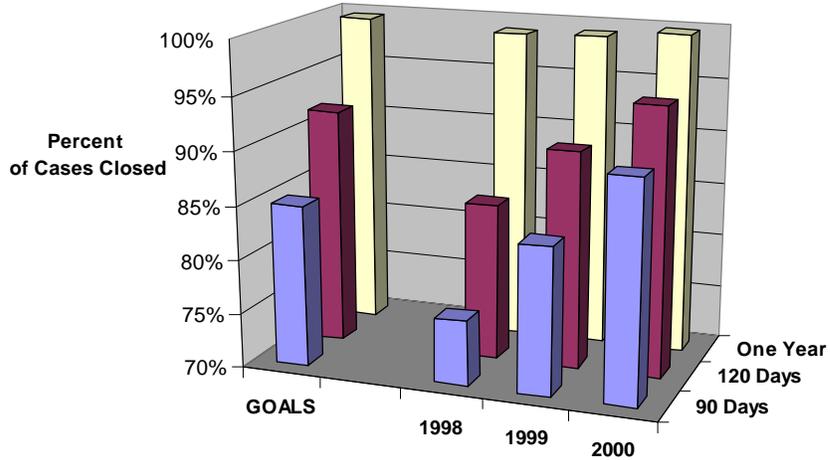
*Employer Outreach:* Beginning in FY 1998 and continuing through FY 2000, VETS conducted a sweeping and aggressive USERRA educational outreach effort directed at public and private employers. VETS mailed USERRA informational materials to 60,000 Federal contractors and subcontractors, including most of the nation's largest corporations. VETS followed that with a mailing to nearly 1,000 associations and other organizations that represent the full spectrum of private American employers.

Over the past three years, VETS has greatly expanded efforts to improve awareness of USERRA among Federal executive employers at all levels. As a major component of the Department's overall USERRA outreach campaign, VETS staff has continued to seek opportunities to address human resources professionals within the executive branch. Many of the presentations have been made in partnership with VETS' Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve partners from the DOD. Early in FY 2000, a USERRA and veterans' preference presentation made at the Department of Housing and Urban Development was televised and broadcast live worldwide via satellite. By November 1999, all the cabinet agencies had been provided USERRA outreach briefings and/or educational materials. In addition, numerous other large agencies in the executive branch have hosted USERRA presentations, including the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB). These outreach efforts will continue indefinitely. VETS believes that establishing links with headquarters-level managers in the agencies will improve compliance throughout all levels of those agencies.

(See Chart 7 on following page for USERRA case closures vs goals for PY 1998 through PY 2000.)

**Chart 7**

## USERRA Case Closures vs. Goals 1998 - 2000



VETS has shown dramatic improvement in closing USERRA cases expeditiously. To ensure that its customers continue to receive the best possible service, VETS will focus increased attention on monitoring and optimizing the quality of its USERRA case processing.

## Veterans' Preference

VEOA was signed into law on October 31, 1998 and is codified at Title 5, Chapter 33, U.S.C. Section 3, Improved Redress for Preference Eligibles, transferred the administrative redress provisions of Veterans Preference to DOL/VETS.

Current veterans' preference regulations are still based on the 1944 Veterans' Preference Act. By law, veterans are entitled to employment preference for Federal civil service jobs, under certain eligibility conditions and criteria based on time of service, duration of service and service-connected disability status. Veterans' preference entitles a veteran to an additional five to ten points on examination scores if specific eligibility requirements are met. Veterans' preference also protects preference eligibles during a reduction in force (RIF).

The VEOA guarantees that qualified veterans who have three or more years of honorable military service, and are otherwise eligible for preference status, can now apply for any Federal job previously restricted to "civil service status" candidates only. The law, therefore, considers military service time as an equivalent to civil service experience. The law also extends veterans preference to certain jobs in the government's legislative and judicial branches.

The most significant impact is that VETS, and not OPM, now investigates complaints regarding possible violations of Federal veterans' preference statute and regulations. If a person believes his or her eligibility for preference is not being extended for the purposes of hiring or a RIF, that person may file a written complaint to the Secretary of Labor within 60 days of the alleged violation. VETS will investigate each complaint and try to bring about voluntary compliance. If resolution cannot be achieved within 60 days, the claimant may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). If the MSPB does not issue a judicially reviewable decision within 120 days, the claimant may seek judicial redress in U. S. District Court.

In addition, knowing failure by a government official to comply with veterans' preference requirements will now be treated as a prohibited personnel practice. Disciplinary action can range all the way up to termination.

During this past year, VETS has trained approximately 125 investigators at NVTI to better prepare them to investigate veterans' preference complaints. VETS also sent letters to the Procurement Officials of the Federal agency effected by the changes in the VEOA and informed them of the changes.

VETS has also developed the Veterans' Preference Advisor. The advisor provides electronic information and advice to employers and employees on veterans' preference, with specific focus on the user's particular situation. The Advisor can be found in the VETS section of the Department's "elaws" page at <http://www.dol.gov/elaws>.

Complaints received and disposition for FY 2000 are as follows:

Cases Carried in from FY 1999: 32

Cases Opened during FY 2000:

Issue Hiring	292
Issue RIF	44
Total	336

Disposition:

Hiring closed with merit:	26
Hiring closed without merit:	241
RIF closed with merit:	0
RIF closed without merit:	27
Administratively Closed (Merit determination not made)	52
Total closed:	346

Cases carried into FY 2001: 22

During FY 1999 VETS received 299 veterans' preference complaints as compared to 336 received during FY 2000. For the first quarter of FY 2001 VETS has received 94 complaints which project out to a potential of 376 cases for this year.

**Federal Contractor Veterans'**  
**Employment Program**  
**(VETS-100)**

Title 38, United States Code, 4212(d), requires that Federal contractors and subcontractors report annually the number of special disabled veterans and Vietnam-era veterans in their workforce by job category and hiring location and the total number of new hires, including the number of targeted veterans hired during the reporting period. For the September 2001 reporting date, in accordance with VEOA, P.L. 105-339, Federal contractors and subcontractors will also be required to report any other protected veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized. Implementing regulations found at 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 61-250 are currently under revision. It is expected that the final regulations will be published by July 2001.

For the FY 1999 reporting period (reports due to be submitted on September 30, 1999), 32,222 Federal contractors and subcontractors submitted VETS-100 Reports. Every reporting organization is required to submit a separate report for each employing site. About 26,466 of the reporting contractors are single establishment organizations that submit only one VETS-100 report. In the meantime, 5,756 of the contractors are multiple establishment organizations. These multiple establishment reporting organizations each submitted one VETS-100 report for their headquarters locations and 145,264 VETS-100 reports for employing sites other than the headquarters locations. These organizations also submitted 7,288 state consolidated reports, each of which includes within one report, the information for multiple employing sites in a single state.

In all, 32,222 reporting Federal contractors and subcontractors submitted 184,774 reports for employing sites for FY 1999. These reports indicated that 68,855 special disabled and 1,051,515 Vietnam-era were current Federal contractor employees. New hires reported for this period were 12,968 special disabled and 100,341 Vietnam-era veterans.

Analysis of the above data indicates that the total number of reports submitted dropped in FY 1999. There were 194,580 reports submitted in FY 1998 compared to 184,774 submitted in FY 1999. The number of newly hired Vietnam Era veterans reported for 1999 has dropped sharply from the number reported for that same category in FY 1998 (100,341 for FY 1999 compared with 125,485 for FY 1998). With respect to newly hired Special Disabled veterans the difference between the FY 1998 and FY 1999 results were the same as that noted for newly hired Vietnam Era veterans. Specifically, the number of newly hired Special Disabled veterans reported for FY 1998 was 15,500 compared with 12,968 in FY 1999.

VETS attributes the drop in numbers to two factors. First, commercial computer software companies are used by some reporting Federal contractors. It is common for large companies to rely on commercially produced software packages to calculate the number of individual veterans to be included in a given company's report. It may be that these software packages did not allow for targeted veterans to be included in all the veteran categories listed. Also, in FY 1998, VETS sent a delinquency notice to Federal contractors who were in the VETS-100 data base but had not responded two months after the due date of the report. Due to budgetary constraints, a delinquency notice was not sent in FY 1999.

The FY 2000 VETS-100 Reports were due on September 30, 2000. However, reports are received from September 30, 2000 through September 29, 2001. During the period September 30, 2000 through December 31, 2001, VETS has received twenty-eight thousand two hundred sixty (28,260) reports from Federal contractors and subcontractors. Complete Federal contractor data for FY 2000 will be provided in the FY 2001 report.

Under the VEOA there is a new category of veterans to be reported. The category titled "other protected veterans" on the VETS-100 Report, consists of individuals who served in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized. The reporting of this information was optional for FY 2000

but will be required for the FY 2001 report. On November 1, 2000, the President signed P.L. 106-419 adding “recently separated veterans” to those veterans covered by the Federal Contractor Program. A “recently separated veteran” is defined as any veteran during the one-year period beginning on the date of such veteran’s discharge or release from active duty. On the VETS-100 Report due in September 2001, the collection of this information will be optional and will be mandatory for the report due in 2002.

# National Veterans' Training Institute

VETS has long recognized the need to formally train field staff involved in the provision of employment, job training, counseling, placement, and related services to veterans and reservists. Therefore, VETS initiated a comprehensive training program in 1987 by creating NVTI. In 1988, Congress authorized NVTI as a permanent institution (P.L. 100-323, enacted May 20, 1988).

The NVTI contract was competed again in FY 1998, resulting in the University of Colorado at Denver being awarded the contract with authority to continue with four option years based on successful performance.

The training institute has proven to be an extremely effective instrument for ensuring a uniform high quality of services throughout the Nation. NVTI's curriculum is structured primarily to meet the training needs of LVERs and DVOPs affiliated with the SESAs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands. NVTI continues to meet new training needs as they arise. New courses developed in the past several years include TAP, USERRA, grants management, case management, VETS/VR&E Partnership Operating Guide and more recently, Federal veterans' preference and USERRA discrimination provisions.

In FY 2000, VETS continued to offer training through NVTI for SESA and VETS' staff in case management, and in the successful management and oversight of the case management process. These two case management training offerings will improve skills in this function, so critical to effective client service in the development of a "one-stop career center" service environment. In addition, NVTI continued to offer Orientation to Veterans' Programs to states that implemented one-stop career centers.

The Veterans' Benefits course is now delivered using "Distance Learning Technologies" only. In addition to case management training, NVTI continued to offer the same range of courses throughout FY 2000, placing highest priority on the training of DVOPs and LVERs in its presentations of the Labor Employment Specialist, Veterans' Benefits, and Case Management courses. TAP related training also continued for the military branches as well as for contractor facilitators. Off-site class sessions of selected courses were presented at sites around the nation selected on the basis of cost-effectiveness and participant accessibility.

The training mission of NVTI also extends to others involved in services to veterans, including VETS national, regional, and state level staff. In FY 2000, with the \$2 million appropriation provided, NVTI trained a total of 1,569 participants. Of this total, 493 participants were DVOPs and 451 were LVERs. The remainder of the participants included 276 from DOD, 113 from individual States (participants other than DVOPs and LVERs), and 111 VETS' staff. Other veterans' service providers (VSOs, HVRP and VWIP staff) accounted for 125 participants. Department of Defense participants reimburse VETS for their Transition Assistance Management Program training.

NVTI's Resource and Technical Assistance Center is a repository for a variety of materials and information resources on veterans' issues and services that offers on-going support for individuals who are about to, or have completed NVTI training.

NVTI has also developed and implemented an informational Internet based web site that can be accessed at [www.nvti.cudenver.edu](http://www.nvti.cudenver.edu).

## **Transition Assistance Program**

In November 1990, with the enactment of P.L. 101-510, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) pilot was authorized as a permanent program under Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 58, Section 1144. TAP operates as a partnership between DOL, DOD, the Department of Transportation and VA. This partnership also exists at the local level, where memoranda of understanding spell out the responsibilities of SESAs, DOD military installations, VETS and VA.

In FY 2000, there were 3,183 TAP workshops provided to 121,384 participants. The program averaged 265 monthly workshops throughout the year. This is a decrease of 5 percent from FY 1999, when 3,247 workshops were conducted. The year ended with 170 active TAP sites in 45 states. The decrease in workshops is attributed to the cessation of the military downsizing. However, VETS continues to concentrate its efforts on the transitioning service members and their spouses. All those involved in TAP - DVETs, SESA staff (DVOPs and LVERs), service commanders and installation coordinators, VSOs and employers - make quality a program priority.

During FY 2000, a VETS contractor completed research on the effectiveness and utility of TAP workshops. The contractor's findings were based on feedback from participants in 21 "focus-groups" conducted at twelve military installations. The participants comprised Air Force, Army, Marine, and Navy personnel who had attended the workshop. The findings of this research can be found in the contractor's "TAP Focus Group Evaluation Final Report" provided to VETS in February of 2000. A key finding included: "The participants generally agreed that TAP exceeded their expectations, and gave them a sense of both increased confidence and self-worth for seeking a civilian job." The results of the research were extremely supportive of the TAP workshops. The participants recommended a general "modernization" of the TAP workshops to provide the most modern and progressive training to enhance separating servicemembers' job search skills. VETS has begun an initiative to "update" and "reengineer" the TAP program. VETS has identified TAP program components that should be evaluated and, as needed, redesigned to enhance the value of the TAP workshop. Primary among these components are the TAP workshop manual and TAP presentation materials. VETS is also considering developing and implementing an interactive TAP website.

## **Advisory Committee on Veterans'**

## **Employment and Training**

The Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training (ACVET) was established pursuant to Section 8 of the Veterans' Benefits Amendments Act of 1991 (P. L.102-16) and Section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (P.L. 92-462, Title 5 U.S.C. app. II). The ACVET's authority is codified in Title 38 U.S.C., Section 4110. Notice of its chartering was published in the Federal Register on August 10, 1994 (Volume 59 FR 40923). The ACVET was re-chartered on October 2, 2000.

The ACVET is responsible for assessing the employment and training needs of the nation's veterans; for evaluating the effectiveness with which existing DOL programs deliver required services to our nation's veterans; and, where deficiencies are detected, for recommending appropriate remedial action.

The ACVET consists of 16 members. By law, it must have membership of at least 12, but no more than 18 individuals appointed by the Secretary of Labor. Included are representatives nominated by veterans' organizations that have a national employment program, and not more than six individuals who are recognized authorities in business, employment, training, rehabilitation, or labor and who are not employees of DOL.

The following, or their representatives, are ex-officio, nonvoting members of the ACVET: The Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Health and Human Services, and Education; the Assistant Secretaries of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training, and Employment and Training; the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; the Postmaster General; the Directors of the Office of Personnel Management, and the United States Employment Service; and other representatives of nationally based organizations with a significant involvement in veterans' employment and training programs.

The ACVET membership reemphasized their support for VETS' licensing and certification initiatives. The membership continues to support the Department's funding requests for homeless veterans. It should be noted that the funding for VETS' HVRP program is now at its highest funded level ever. This is due, in part, to the work that many of the ACVET members did in the past several years to support and champion increased funding for HVRP.

## **Licensing and Certification and Special Pilot Initiatives**

Studies have shown that licensing and certification (credentialing) requirements for civilian employment pose a barrier to a smooth transition from military service to civilian employment. For the last three years, VETS has been working with the VA, DOD, the employment and training community, with employers and unions, and with Federal and state licensing agencies to see if we can make the certification and licensing process work for, rather than against, veterans.

Interagency Task Force on Certification and Licensing of Transitioning Military Personnel:

The Task Force was created on April 24, 1998, by DOL and VA to identify barriers to Federal certification and licensing and develop strategies to address them. The Task Force completed the Final Report on the Status of the Interagency Task Force on Certification and Licensing of Transitioning Military Personnel on June 14, 2000. The Task Force members have since broken up into smaller groups (panels):

- Federal Credentialing Initiatives Panel - will document and promote Federal initiatives between different agencies. Two initiatives to be promoted are naval aviation and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and naval training and the Coast Guard. The agencies agreed to work on creating ways for naval aviators to easily obtain needed FAA licenses, and for navy seamen to obtain Coast Guard licenses necessary to work on nonmilitary vessels.
- Military Marketing Panel - will promote the provision of credentialing information to both service members and the training commands of each service.
- Civilian Marketing Panel - will heighten the awareness of the military training and education programs to civilian credentialing boards.
- Federal Employment Panel - will meet with personnel officials of each of the Federal agencies to determine the hiring practices of veterans and provide strategies to them about how they can more effectively recruit transitioning service members.

The Federal level agencies involved include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense (to include the services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support - DAN TES ), Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor (VETS and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training), Transportation (including the Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Highway Administration), VA, Environmental Protection Agency and non cabinet level agencies such as the General Services Administration, Military Sealift Command, National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, National Partnership for Reinventing Government, National Skill Standards Board, OPM, Small Business Administration and the U. S. Customs Service.

Licensing and Certification State Pilot:

This pilot was developed to move veterans through the licensing and certification process in select credentialed occupations in five pilot states - Colorado, Ohio, Maryland, South Carolina and Georgia.

Ohio and Maryland chose to continue their respective pilots for an additional year. Their second year of activity concluded on June 30, 2000.

Maryland continued to refine the activities they developed in the medical certification area and expanded their scope to include a web site. Ohio surpassed all expectations with the results they attained . With a clear focus and a dedicated staff, they took this pilot and built a veterans' credentialing infrastructure

within the State that provided credentialing assistance to over 200 recently separated veterans in four separate occupations (Airframe and Power plant Mechanic, Commercial Truck Driver, Metalworker and Stationery Engineer).

Deliverables that each state provided upon conclusion of their individual pilot included a technical operations guide for use by SESA staff to assist veteran customers in their quest for stable employment in a credentialed occupation. VETS' staff have completed a technical operations guide for additional states to use should the pilot be expanded.

#### Promoting Re-employment Opportunities for Veterans (PROVET):

PROVET is an employer focused job development and placement program. The program focuses on screening, matching and placing job-ready transitioning servicemembers into available, career-building jobs in targeted industries with a recognized labor shortage and growth potential. A marketing campaign is an integral part of PROVET. The marketing campaign alerts employers and separating military personnel of the program.

Tennessee started as one of the initial pilot states for PROVET in FY 1999, targeting the electronics and information technology industries. Early in the pilot, they found that many of the individuals exiting the military did not have the required civilian certifications to effectively transition to civilian occupations in information technology. VETS provided the State with a JTPA grant to fund short-term computer technology training and certification testing. During FY 2000, 225 separating military personnel were enrolled in PROVET, of those 75 were placed in training and 140 entered employment at an average wage of \$14.66 per hour. The remaining 85 PROVET applicants were still receiving either training or placement services at the end of FY 2000.

Initial planning is underway to develop a PROVET pilot in Texas. The pilot will focus on placing separating military personnel from Ft. Bliss in positions in the trucking industry.

#### Communication Workers of America (CWA) Military To Work Project:

The Military to Work Project is a unique distance learning and job referral program for both separating military personnel and veterans. The Internet based program allows the user to self-register, take an assessment test and receive an evaluation of their technical abilities. The program is designed to help separating service members determine the best job match for their skills, interests, and career goals for high technology jobs within the telecommunications and information technology industries. Fully qualified registrants are referred to high profile employers, (i.e. Lucent Technologies, AT&T, Verizon, Southwestern Bell, etc.) within the targeted fields. Those transitioning military members and veterans who may require additional training or course work are directed to apprenticeship and skill certification programs that will enable them to qualify for career building jobs in the rapidly expanding telecommunications industry. In partnership with CISCO Systems, CWA has developed an on-line distance learning component that includes:

- Computer Literacy Assessment and Training;
- A+ Computer Technology Assessment and Training; and
- CISCO Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Assessment and Training

The Military to Work Project was funded through JTPA discretionary funds and operated during PY99 (June 30, 1999 through June 29, 2000). During the grant period, 2029 servicemembers and veterans registered for services on the website; 1,571 completed the self-assessment; based on the results of the assessment, 884 were referred to training, and 1,834 were referred to participating employers for employment consideration.

#### Military and Veterans' Credentialing Web site Development:

VETS developed and implemented a veterans' credentialing web site "Use Your Military Experience and Training"(UMET)([www.umet-vets.dol.gov/](http://www.umet-vets.dol.gov/)) which serves as a comprehensive source of information on certification and licensing that is tailored to the unique needs of current and former military personnel. The UMET web site was developed in response to the findings of the VETS' funded American Legion study and the Report of the Congressional Commission on Servicemembers and Veterans Transition Assistance, which indicated that this type of information is beneficial in reducing barriers to employment related to certification and licensing. The web site serves as a consolidated source of credentialing information and provides answers to questions, such as:

- What is credentialing?
- How does credentialing effect current and former military personnel?
- What financial resources are available to servicemembers and veterans seeking certification and licensing?
- What steps should be taken to become credentialed?

The web site integrates existing databases and web pages related to credentialing and, for a limited set of occupations deemed most relevant to current and former military personnel, provides detailed information on the gaps between military training and experience and that required by civilian credentialing boards.

#### Computing Technologies Industry Association (CompTIA) Initiative:

VETS is funding an IT project in partnership with CompTIA. CompTIA is an alliance of 7,500 - 10,000 companies involved in information technology, including IBM and Gateway, Microsoft and Novell, Best Buy and CompUSA. The grant is a pilot project to:

- recruit veterans recently separated from the military;
- assess their interest and skill level for a potential career in IT;
- provide occupational skills training and certification;
- place in employment in IT positions; and
- follow-up with participant 90 days after entering employment.

The curriculum includes training in A+ which is the industry recognized entry-level certification for IT service and support professionals. In addition, the participants receive technical training in NETWORK+ to begin preparing them for the next level of certification. CompTIA pilot projects were implemented in San Diego, California and San Antonio, Texas in FY 2000. In San Diego, 28 veterans were trained, 8 have passed the certification and 7 entered employment. Based on the results of San Diego, adjustments were made to the project before beginning in San Antonio. In San Antonio, 20 veterans were trained, 14 have passed the certification and were placed in IT positions.

## **SECTION II**

### **Other Federal Activities Serving Veterans**

## State Employment Security Agencies

The SESAs remained the primary service delivery agents in FY 2000 for the delivery of public labor exchange services for veterans. DVETs work closely with their SESA partners and their Employment and Training Administration counterparts to maximize services provided to veterans.

### Workforce Investment Act (WIA):

WIA reforms Federal job training programs and creates a new comprehensive workforce investment system. VETS' staff participated on the National Office review team, which was established to ensure the appropriate administration of one-stop delivery systems in every state. VETS' staff were able to ensure that, as a required partner, each of the Strategic five-year State Plans for Title I of WIA and the Wagner-Peyser Act included the appropriate language and level of services to be administered for veterans within the one-stop delivery system. VETS' staff were also included on the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA's) Performance Accountability Team which was established to develop and implement the WIA Performance Rating System. These activities included development of regulations, guidance and associated tools to determine the level of service activity generated on the State and National levels. This association enabled VETS to analyze and evaluate the Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data mechanism used to track individuals through the one-stop delivery system.

At the local level, the Wagner-Peyser funded SESAs are the focal point of an integrated service delivery system of one-stop career centers. WIA places emphasis on assisting a broad array of customers ranging from those that may use self-help tools or receive minimal assistance or intensive staff assisted services. New technology has been developed to allow customers to directly access resource rooms, find labor market information and identify job opportunities.

DVOPs and LVERs provide core and intensive services to veterans based on the particular integrated service delivery system implemented in each state, as indicated in each State's Agreement with the Secretary of Labor. This comprehensive Agreement, developed by the State Workforce Investment Board as part of the State's five-year WIA plan, specifies the provision of services to veterans, the roles and responsibilities of the WIA service providers, and the integration of DVOP specialists and LVERs into the State's one-stop delivery system. The Agreement is developed to assure coordination and avoid duplication at the service delivery points within the State.

### Services to Veterans:

In PY 1999, the SESAs registered a total of 16,708,228 applicants consisting of 1,676,025 veterans and other eligibles and 15,032,259 non-veterans. Veterans' groups were registered by type as follows: Vietnam-era 581,633; disabled 135,055; special disabled 63,624; and other eligible persons 7,708. (See [Attachment 4](#) for breakout of veterans groups registered by age and by state.) The number of total veterans and other eligible persons registered in PY 1999 decreased by approximately 124,000 from the number registered in PY 1998, a reduction of 6.9 percent. Likewise, the number of Vietnam-era veterans registered for services decreased by approximately 31,000 in PY1999, but the number of disabled veterans registered increased by 465 and the number of special disabled veterans registered increased by 1,501. Causes for this decrease may have been due, in part, to (1) the improving economic conditions in many parts of the country, (2) the increased number of unregistered veterans who may access self-help modalities (e.g. Internet access to jobs for job-ready/career-set veterans), and (3) flat level funding which has led to decreases in Wagner-Peyser Act funded staffing levels and subsequent service levels. In addition, many SESAs have used Wagner-Peyser funds to support system development.

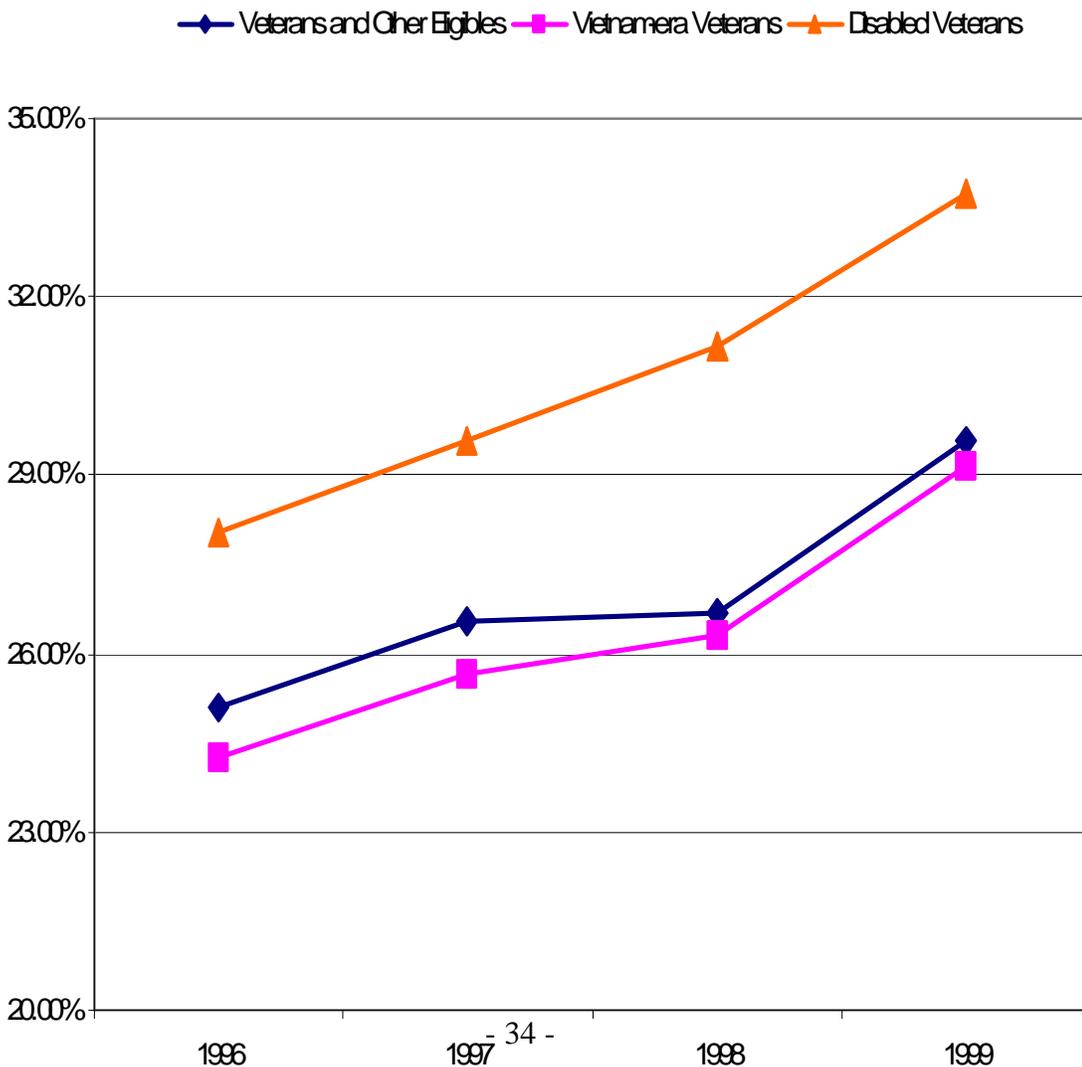
### Entered Employment Rates:

Entered Employment is the unduplicated count of all applicants (veterans) who entered employment by job placement or who secured employment within 90 calendar days of receiving specific services that were wholly or partially funded by SESAs. Of the 1,675,969 veterans and other eligibles registered, 495,942 or 30 percent entered employment while only 21 percent of the non-veterans registered entered employment.

In spite of the fact we have fewer veterans registering for services, the entered employment rates for veterans and other eligibles have risen over the past four program years. In PY 1996, 25.08 percent of registered veterans and other eligibles entered employment and in PY 1999, that rate increased from 19.6 percent to 30 percent. The entered employment rates increased over the same period of time for the other veterans categories and are displayed on **Chart 8**, below.

**Chart 8**

**Entered Employment Rates for Veterans Served by Public Labor Exchange Staff**



Veterans Referred/Placed in Employment:

A total of 777,568 or

46 percent of the registered veterans and other eligible persons received referrals to an interview for a job opening. This compares favorably to 5,955,612 or only 40 percent of the registered non-veterans who received job referrals. Of those veterans and other eligibles referred, 201,721 or 26 percent were placed in employment. Additionally, 270,359 or 46 percent of the registered Vietnam-era veterans received job referrals with 65,750 or 24 percent of those referred being placed. Of the 135,055 disabled veterans registered, 71,289 or 53 percent received job referrals with 19,729 or 28 percent of those referred being placed. Special disabled veterans were referred at a rate of 50 percent with 29 percent of those referred being placed. See [Attachment 4](#) for a breakout of veterans by age group and state who were referred and placed in employment.

Many veterans obtain jobs due to the assistance provided directly or indirectly by SESA and VETS staff. However, the numbers are not captured in the SESA reports. For example, many veterans find jobs through electronic tools provided by the Department over the Internet. Additionally, thousands of separating military personnel attend TAP workshops where lessons are learned and jobs are obtained upon separation without registering with a SESA .

#### Veterans Referred/Placed in a Federal Job:

A total of 69,614 or 4 percent of veterans and other eligible person registrants were referred to a Federal job. Of those veterans and other eligibles referred, 11,363 or 16 percent were placed in a Federal job. (NOTE: This category is captured and reported only for certain categories of veterans.) The number of Vietnam-era veterans referred to a Federal job was 23,358 (4 percent), with 4,039 or 17 percent of those referred being placed in a Federal job. There were 8,780 disabled veterans or 7 percent of those registered who were referred to a Federal job, with 1,770 or 20 percent of the disabled veterans referred being placed in a Federal job. The number of special disabled veterans referred to a Federal job was 4,222 (7 percent of those registered) with 961 or 23 percent of those referred being placed in a Federal job. See [Attachment 5](#) for a breakout of veterans by age group and state who were referred and placed in a Federal job.

#### Veterans Referred to and Placed in Federal Training:

A total of 61,734 veterans and other eligibles (4 percent of the total numbers of veterans and other eligible persons registered) were referred to Federal training. Of those referred, 17,772 (29 percent) were placed in Federal training. (NOTE: This category is captured only for veterans as a whole.) Four percent of registered Vietnam-era veterans were referred to Federal training, with 27 percent of them being placed. Seven percent of disabled veterans were referred and 44 percent of them were placed. Special disabled veterans were referred at a rate of 8 percent, and 55 percent of them were placed. See [Attachment 6](#) for a breakout of veterans by age group and state who were referred to Federal training. See [Attachment 7](#) for those placed in Federal training.

#### Veterans Counseled:

A total of 113,396 (7 percent) veterans and other eligible persons were counseled. This is compared to 3 percent of registered non-veterans who received counseling. Seven percent of Vietnam-era and 11 percent of disabled veterans registered were counseled. Special disabled veterans were counseled at a rate of 12 percent of those registered. See [Attachment 8](#) for a breakout of veterans by age group and state who were counseled..

#### Veterans Receiving Some Reportable Service:

All reporting states and territories provided some reportable services to all groups of veterans. A total

of 1,319,144, or 79 percent of the total number of veterans and other eligible persons registered, received some reportable service. This is compared to 64 percent of non-veterans registered who received some reportable service. Eighty-one percent of Vietnam-era registered veterans, 86 percent of disabled registered veterans, and 83 percent of special disabled registered veterans received some reportable service. See [Attachment 9](#) for a breakout of veterans by age group and state who received some reportable service..

**Fifth-Quarter Funding:**

In the past, states have been reluctant to fill DVOP and LVER vacancies during the fourth quarter because of the uncertainty of funding for the next FY. Keeping staff positions vacant reduced services to veterans during the fourth quarter of each FY and the first quarter of the next FY because fewer DVOPs and LVERs were on board. In an attempt to help alleviate this situation, Congress, at the Department’s request, authorized a “fifth-quarter” of funding beginning with FY 1996. Fifth-quarter funding allows states to carry over unexpended DVOP and LVER funds at the end of one FY into the first quarter of the new FY for ninety days (October 1 through December 31) rather than having the funds lapse at the end of the FY. This enables states to maintain staff at current levels and provide continuity of service.

**Performance - SESA Measures of Service:**

SESA Measures of Performance are negotiated measures of service agreed to between the ASVET and individual states. These measures identify the degree of priority of service provided to veterans, Vietnam-era veterans, and disabled veterans, over their non-veteran counterparts. The activities measured are “placed/obtained employment”, “Federal contractor placements”, “counseled”, “placed in training”, and those having “received some reportable service”. All SESAs, with the exception of New York and the Virgin Islands, reported their final accomplishments against the performance standards set pursuant to Title 38 U.S.C. §4107. New York and the Virgin Islands were unable to provide measures of service data due to problems with new data collections systems. Corrective action plans were requested. For PY 1999, twenty-eight of the 51 SESAs reporting met all their performance standards. Fifteen of the reporting SESAs showed good cause for their inability to meet all of their standards. Eight of the reporting SESAs were required to implement a corrective action plan. See [Chart 9](#) on the following page.

**Chart 9 PY 1999 Negotiated Measures of Service by State in Regional Order**